

# Triad Shuts-out Mascoutah To Win Regional Title - Sets Up Rematch With Marion In Sectional Semis

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
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TROY - The Triad High School girl's soccer program raised its 13th straight IHSA Class 2A Regional title Friday night after a 3-0 win over Mississippi Valley Conference rivals Mascoutah.

It was the program's 17th Regional title overall.

Triad made it a season sweep over the Indians after 1-0 and 3-0 wins in the regular season.

Friday night's affair was a close one throughout the first half, before Triad scored twice in the second half to put the game away.

"Mascoutah gave us a game. They came ready to play, Triad head coach Matt Bettlach said.

"I thought our girls played well from the start. Overall, I'm proud of the girls, from where we started the season to where we are now, I'm a big fan of what these girls have done," Bettlach added.

The Knights were on the door step early. A shot just 20 seconds in forced a nice save from Mascoutah's keeper. Triad had many opportunities early on, but Mascoutah came closest when a free kick drilled the crossbar in the 20th minute.

Not too long after that, Triad found the go-ahead goal.

After the Indians struggled to get the ball out of their 18-yard box, the ball bobbed around before eventually finding the feet of senior midfielder Caty Burton. She had to weave through a couple defenders before getting her shot off that went off the bar and in.

The game went into halftime with the Knights up 1-0.

Coming back out, Mascoutah's keeper had to make another great save in a one-on-one situation with sophomore forward Alina Ayran in the 49th minute to keep it a one-goal game.

It didn't stay like that for very long.

Ten minutes later, freshman midfielder London Looby scored from right outside the 18-yard box to double the lead.

The Knights sealed the deal in the 77th minute when Burton grabbed her second. Senior forward Gabbie Wood chased down a ball toward the touchline, got there first to get a cross off, and ended up getting the assist to her team's third and final goal on the night.

Burton has now scored 10 goals this season to go along with five assists.

"Caty's a hard worker," Bettlach said of his senior captain. "She is going to dig and get after it wherever she is on that field, so when she's in the box, I like our chances to score."

Triad's defense was just as good as its offense in the second half. Mascoutah didn't record a shot on goal in the final 40 minutes.

"Second half, we told the girls, we got the wind, just keep your foot on the gas pedal and keep going," Bettlach said.

A rather hot and humid afternoon disappeared into a dreary, overcast evening, one that grew a bit cold with the constant wind. The Knights had the wind at their backs in the second half, and they were able to do what their coach said, keep their foot on the gas.

After a rollercoaster 11-7-3 regular season, Triad managed to flip a switch come playoff time.

"We implanted it in their brains that our schedule was built to make them compete, and it was a learning process, but it was all built for this specific moment. The teams that we lost to are very good teams, so we knew that was going to make us tough for the playoffs. And here we are, I thought the girls came out and played tough," Bettlach said.

He said all season that everything his team did, prepared them for May.

It's late May now, which means his team is heading pretty deep into the post season.

The win over Mascoutah set up a rematch with Marion in the Sectional Semifinals for the third year straight.

Triad beat Marion 7-0 each time on their way to back-to-back state titles in 2022 and 2021.

Marion came into the post season as the No. 3 seed and are coming off a 2-1 win over No. 2-seeded Carbondale in its Regional Final.

Marion (19-5-1) will host Triad in the Sectional Semifinals on Tuesday, May 23 at 4:30 p.m.